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Adoption of the report of the Committee on its forty-third session

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Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

(Item 4 (a))

Section 31
Jointly financed administrative activities

1. At its 20th meeting, on 24 June 2003, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 31, Jointly financed administrative activities, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 (A/58/6 (Sect. 31)).

2. The representatives of the Secretary-General introduced section 31 (A-D) and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section. The Controller clarified that Regulation 5.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation was not applicable to the activities proposed under section 31 owing to the fact that those activities had not been programmed in the biennium 2002-2003, given their inter-agency nature.

Discussion

3. Support was expressed for the activities proposed under section 31 (A-D). The presentation of the activities in the section in the results-based format for the first time, using the logical framework and the introduction of quantitative targets for performance measurement, was noted. It was pointed out that the objective and expected accomplishments should be more results-oriented. With respect to the indicators of achievement, views were expressed that they should be further refined

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in future to constitute measurable guidelines that would make it possible to establish targets for achieving a higher level of efficiency and performance by each organizational unit programmed under section 31.

4. Deep disappointment was expressed about the fact that programme managers for the International Civil Service Commission, the Joint Inspection Unit, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator had not implemented fully the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, by deleting from their proposals outputs and activities that were obsolete, irrelevant, ineffective, or marginally useful.

5. With regard to section 31A, International Civil Service Commission, while recognizing the role of the Commission within the framework of the policy-making process on the issues of the international civil service, views were expressed that the programme of work of the Commission should reflect more fully the emerging issues and problems of the United Nations common system under the Commission's purview and also the specific needs of the participating organizations. In that context, it was pointed out that the Commission should periodically review its working methods, in line with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 57/285 of 20 December 2002.

6. The view was expressed that the repatriation grant provided to retiring United Nations staff members had become obsolete after 50 years and needed to be reviewed by the International Civil Service Commission.

7. With regard to section 31B, Joint Inspection Unit, the need for an inter-agency oversight and inspection mechanism within the United Nations common system was generally recognized. Views were expressed in support of the activities of the Joint Inspection Unit. The importance of its reports as thought-provoking instruments that stimulated the debates on specific issues and problems of the common system was acknowledged. Views were also expressed that the Joint Inspection Unit often fell behind the developments taking place within the common system, that the Unit in its programme of work was not always focused on the most critical and vitally important issues of the functioning of the common system and that its reports were too general, theoretical and academic in nature and often missing a focus on vital operational aspects of system functioning. It was recalled that in the past, the General Assembly had expressed its concern about the working methods of the Joint Inspection Unit and requested the Unit to review those methods. Views were expressed that the Unit should centre its attention on core issues of the United Nations common system. Views were also expressed that the time had come to review the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit and revise it in order to adapt it to the present realities and current objectives of the common system. It was also pointed out that Member States should provide more guidance to the Unit in the formulation of its annual programmes of work and in identifying the emerging issues of the common system requiring its attention.

8. The view was expressed that the Joint Inspection Unit had become a deeply flawed and dysfunctional body that delivered little value to Member States and the United Nations system overall. The time had come for a comprehensive review of the Unit's continuing relevance and usefulness.

9. The view was also expressed that accomplishments of the Joint Inspection Unit should be more results-oriented. In that connection, it was noted with appreciation that indicators of achievement in table 31.9 included the number of recommendations endorsed by the legislative bodies of participating organizations and the number of recommendations actually implemented. It was emphasized that the setting of priorities for the reports requested by the participating organizations in the annual programme of work of the Unit was important for strengthening the functions of the Unit.

10. With regard to section 31D, Inter-organizational security measures, general support was expressed for the continuous efforts by the United Nations Security Coordinator towards the establishment of the United Nations security management system in the field. Progress achieved so far in the operation of the security management system in the field was noted and commended.

Conclusions and recommendations

11. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 31, Jointly financed administrative activities, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005, with the following modifications, as well as the provisions in the Foreword and Introduction:**

Table 31.24

(a) **Under Objective 1, add a new expected accomplishment as follows: "Ensuring adequate coordination among United Nations agencies to provide for the safety and security of staff".**

(b) **Add new indicators of achievement as follows:**

(i) **"Reduction in the number of preventable security incidents in the field";**

(ii) **"Increase in attendance at joint security training sessions run by the United Nations Security Coordinator in the field"; and**

(iii) **"Compliance by all Resident Coordinators/Humanitarian Coordinators with their responsibilities as 'designated officials' for security".**

12. **The Committee recommended that the Joint Inspection Unit undertake an in-depth review of its Statute, working methods and proceedings and present to the Fifth Committee at the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly concrete proposals on how best the actual weaknesses can be addressed in the context of its consideration of the annual programme of work of the Joint Inspection Unit.**

13. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly, in the context of the annual programme of work of the Joint Inspection Unit, request the Unit to indicate the number of reports of the Unit actually considered by the legislative bodies of participating organizations, and the number of recommendations endorsed by those legislative bodies.**

Table 31.9

Under indicator of achievement (a), add performance measures as follows:

"*Performance measures*:

2000-2001: to be determined

Estimate 2002-2003: to be determined

Target 2004-2005: to be determined"

14. The Committee welcomed the focus of the Chief Executives Board on developing concerted approaches by the United Nations system to the follow-up to recent conferences and summits to help to maximize mutual reinforcement among the new round of trade negotiations launched at Doha, and the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development to optimize the contribution of these processes towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

15. The Committee noted the goal of the consolidated CEB secretariat to ensure a more integrated and coordinated United Nations system response to the policy directives and mandates of Member States and looks forward to the implementation by the Chief Executives Board of the relevant parts of General Assembly resolution 57/270 B of 23 June 2003 on the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits at the national, regional and international levels.